

A BUCKS FREE PRESS PUBLICATION



The BLUES NEWS

The official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club

Issue No. 52

**Rhino: He's
your man**

Keith named Player of the Year

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Any correspondence
should be sent to the Editor,
The Blues News, Wycombe
Wanderers Football Club,
Hillbottom Road, Sands,
High Wycombe.
Telephone (0494) 472100.
Fax (0494) 527633.

Cup clash

WANDERERS extend a warm welcome to both Maidenhead and Reading fans visiting Adams Park for the Berks and Bucks Cup Final.

Whilst Maidenhead are pressing for a top spot in the Ryman Division One League Reading, at the time of going to print, are desperately fighting for points to remain in the Nationwide Division One League.

Boss happy to admit he was relieved when it was all over

Tight division has made it difficult

By Neil Smillie

AND so we come into the final week of our season and it was with much relief two weeks ago that we made ourselves mathematically safe in Division Two after the Millwall game.

The division this year has been so incredibly tight that no team below ninth place in the table were able to relax until a few games before the end of the season.

Great for neutral spectators, nerve racking for genuine supporters and managers.

It has been yet another eventful year for Wycombe Wanderers, we have managed to maintain our second division status, but ended the season with a different manager to the one we started with.

John Gregory took an opportunity he could not refuse to go back to Aston Villa and we all wish him well.

I found myself in the role of manager again and at the point of take-over the chairman said he wanted 15 points, which we managed to achieve when we beat Oldham away.

The players have responded magnificently and have given their all and I would like to thank each one of them for their efforts.

As the club has risen so quickly from the GM Vauxhall Conference to the second division it is natural that there is a period of consolidation.

The competition is growing fiercely with some clubs spending vast amounts of money on players.

We must continue to improve at Wycombe Wanderers through the youth policy and by trying to identify young players from wherever they may be.

Quite plainly we do not have the millions that some other clubs do, but we must constantly strive to improve the quality of our squad.

The spirit and enthusiasm of



Bright future: Neil Smillie watches his team at Adams Park

everyone associated with the club; the staff, players and supporters must also continue to grow to help us proceed.

I am happy to say the community scheme is thriving under Nas and Dave.

We hope to see continued growth in this area throughout the year as it is important that we have strong links

with our community and continue to be a family orientated club, as it is from here that the energy will come from in the future.

Clubs like Charlton Athletic point the way for clubs like Wycombe Wanderers and although we have not had their length of time in the league we must strive to mirror what they have achieved so well.

My congratulations to club captain, Keith Ryan, who has been magnificent for me and it was no surprise when he won the Laurent Perrier/Bucks Free Press Supporters Player of the Season Award.

Finally, I would like to thank you for all your support, have a pleasant summer and we look forward to seeing you all next season.

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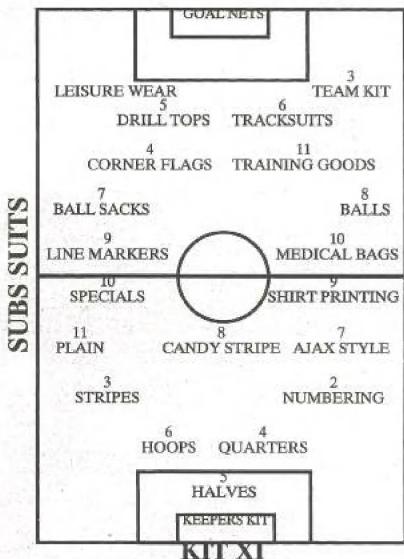
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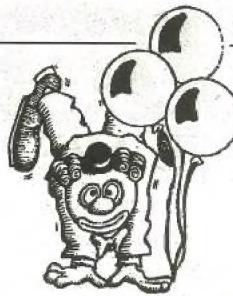
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Blues prove we can stay the pace

IT was nice and a great relief when manager Neil Smillie and the players secured second division football for the Blues at home to Millwall on Saturday, April 18, which was a week earlier than last season.

That result meant that we have accumulated more points than last season and can look forward to our fifth successive season in Division Two.

Lets hope that we can finish off this season tomorrow at the Bescot Stadium, Walsall, with a decent result.

The 1998/99 season will be our sixth consecutive season in the Nationwide Football League.

As our illustrious director Alan Parry (also better known as ITV/Sky Sports commentator) points out, of all the clubs promoted into the Football League from the GM Vauxhall Conference, Wycombe Wanderers is the most successful.

As Alan Parry stated in the Oldham Athletic matchday programme in December: "Since Wimbledon were elected to the Football League 20 years ago, neither they nor any of the eight clubs who have followed them into the professional ranks can better the achievements of Wycombe Wanderers. Fact."

Here follows the record of the clubs (since the introduction of automatic promotion from the Vauxhall Conference) who entered before we did in 1993.

Maidstone United: Three seasons in the bottom division before going out of business.

Scarborough: All 11 seasons to date in the bottom division.

Lincoln City: All seven seasons to date in the bottom division.

Darlington: Promoted from the

Commercial Break
By Mark Austin
Sales & Marketing Manager

bottom division at the first attempt, but relegated the following season and have stayed there ever since.

Barnet: Won promotion from the bottom division after two seasons, but relegated after just one season.

Colchester United: All six seasons to date in the bottom division.

The above record puts into perspective the legendary achievements of Martin O'Neill (now manager at Leicester City), the relative success of Alan Smith (now a Five Live pundit) in his first season, the salvation job carried out by John Gregory (now manager at Aston Villa) and our current manager Neil Smillie, whose youth team are fourth in the South-East Counties League Division Two.

Wycombe Wanderers Football Club have under the above leadership become the most successful club to enter the Football League.

What about Wimbledon? I hear you say, well over their first five seasons in the league Wimbledon were relegated twice, although they deservedly have since gone on to earn Premiership status.

The growing strength of the Conference has been best demonstrated by both ourselves and Macclesfield Town.

Congratulations to Halifax Town who have won the Conference at the sixth attempt and earned re-entry into the Football League.

Interestingly enough, it was Halifax who swapped places with the Blues when we were promoted. I wonder whether Doncaster Rovers will ever reappear in the professional circuit?

LETTER

Supporter's message from America

MY name is Samuel Smith and I am an ex-pat from High Wycombe, now living in Easton, Pennsylvania.

I recently received a copy of The Blues News from my mum who still lives in Tylers Green. It was interesting to read about the latest news on my favourite football team.

She even included a Wycombe Wanderers carsticker for my back window which I am proudly displaying for everyone to see.

With the World Cup this summer many Americans have taken up an interest in the sport of soccer, but most of them are only familiar with the Premier League teams.

I am more than happy to enlighten them by talking about the Blues and other teams in the lower divisions. I even wear my navy and sky football shirt during the summer months and receive many favourable comments about it.

I remember when I was a young lad and my family lived on Rutland Street off Suffield Road next to the old Loakes Park. On weekday nights I used to walk my dog up to Loakes Park after half-time and the gates would be open to the stadium for anybody to just walk in and watch the rest of the match for free. This of course was back during the time when Wycombe was not even a

professional team and had the lopsided pitch.

I finally left England in 1980 and return about once every four or five years to visit my parents.

Nevertheless they keep me updated with copies of the Bucks Free Press from time to time. I am glad to see how far the Blues have come in the past 18 years.

I have a brother who lives in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania which is about two hours west of where I live and he has discovered a Wycombe Wanderers web page on the internet!

He mentioned a supporters club and I am interested in joining. Do you have any overseas members and if so are any of them over here on this side of the pond?

I would really like to know. Could you please if at all possible mention this subject in a future issue to see if it sparks any interest amongst your readers.

If so I would be happy to hear from anyone in the States who is a Blues fan like myself. I can be reached through my place of employment or at my home address as follows: Officer Samuel B Smith, Easton Police Dept, 25 South 3rd Street, Easton, PA 18042 USA. Tel: (610) 250 6778 or at my home: 62 Highlands Boulevard, Easton, PA 18042 USA. Tel: (610) 515 0459.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I hope to hear from you or any other Blues fans in the near future.

Samuel Smith, USA



ON YOUR MARKS: Mark Stallard has just one game to go, at Walsall tomorrow, if he wants to better Miquel Desouza's Wanderers record of 18 league goals in a season.

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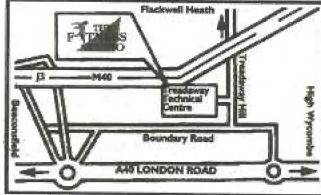


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THE popular Sportsmans Dinners will return to Adams Park next season with guest speakers including Tommy Docherty and legendary England goalkeeper Gordon Banks.

Adams Park Events Ltd are again running a series of five Sportsmans Dinners in the air conditioned Vere Suite at Adams Park next season.

Should you not wish to miss any of these outstanding performers contact Mark Austin or Claire Ramsden on (01494) 538461 or (01494) 472100 to book a table of ten or 12.

If you book the series you will receive a £250 pre-payment discount.

Reservations as usual are being taken on a first come first served basis. So please book early.

The all star line-up for 1998/99 begins on Monday, September 21 with guest speaker Gordon Banks and comedian Tony Gerrard.

They will be followed by Monday, November 23 - guest speaker Norman Whiteside, comedian Peter Lucas;

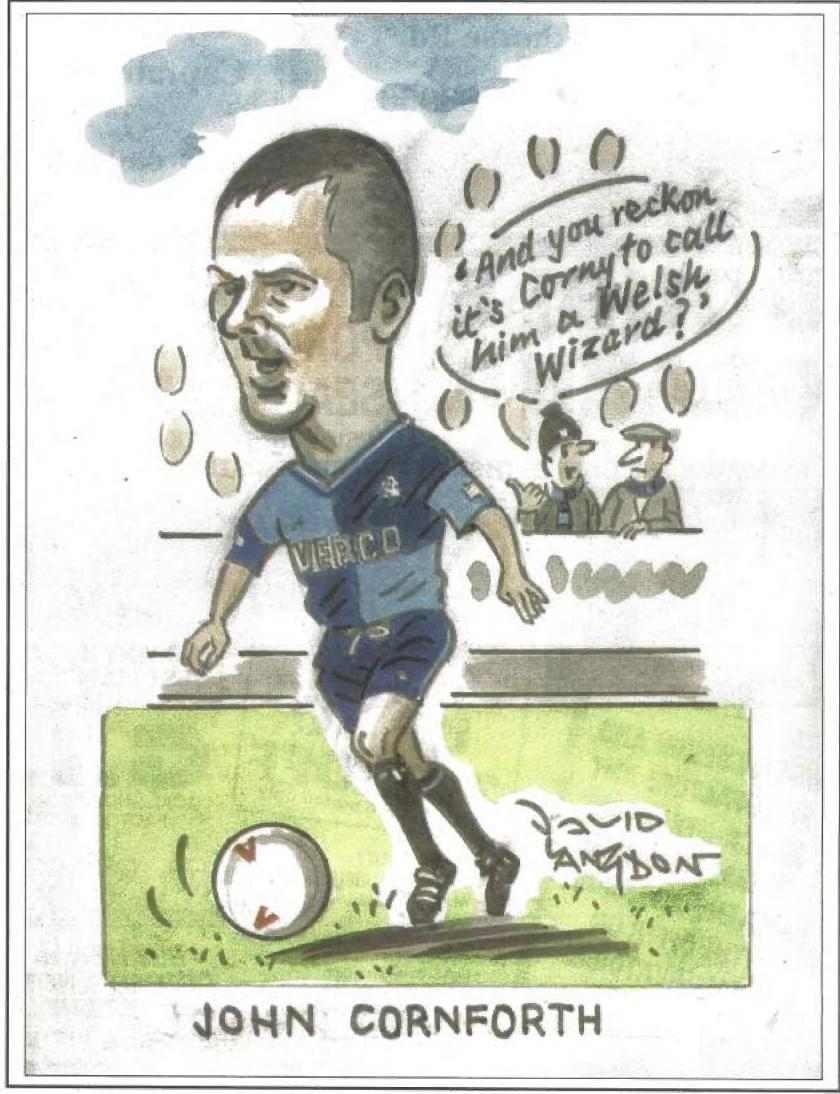


Dinner party: Enjoy yourself at Adams Park

Monday, January 25, 1999 - Guest Speaker Gareth Chilcott, comedian Mike Pugh; Monday, March 22, 1999 - guest speaker John H Stracey, comedian Tommy Sutton; Monday, May 17, 1999 - guest speaker Tommy Docherty, comedian Eddie Archer.

Each evening consists of a four course dinner followed by coffee and mints, the guest speaker, followed by a top quality comedian.

Tables cost £380 for ten people and £420 for 12. Bars open at 6pm and there is a strict dress code of Lounge Suits.





DRESSING DOWN: Blues directors get into the swing of things by donning Wanderers shirts for the recent Mutiny Day at Adams Park. They are (pictured from l to r) Ivor Beeks, Brian Lee, Alain Thibault, Gordon Richards, Graham Pearn, Monty Seymour and Jack Adams.

Club captain polls more than half of votes

Ryan's a clear Blues winner

KEITH Ryan was the fans choice for the Laurent Perrier/Bucks Free Press Player of the Year award.

The popular defender and current club captain polled more than half the votes cast by fans at Adams Park and through the Bucks Free Press.

The former midfielder, who has been reborn at the back, has always been a favourite among the Adams Park faithful. But this year he won a special place in their hearts after returning from a two-year injury lay-off.

He has been outstanding at the back for Wycombe throughout the season.

Martin Taylor, who has produced some world class saves this term, took second spot in the poll, with midfielder Steve Brown squeezing into third spot.

Steve McGavin and Dave Carroll shared joint-fourth.

Ryan received a Jeroboam of Laurent Perrier Brut Champagne, the Bucks Free Press Supporters' Player of the Season Shield and a tankard, courtesy of the BFP.

Runner-up Taylor received a Magnum of Laurent Perrier Brut Champagne, while Brown was presented with a bottle of Laurent Perrier Brut Champagne.

The club would like to thank Laurent Perrier UK



Honoured again: Ryan receives March's Player of the Month award

Ltd and the Bucks Free Press Group for jointly sponsoring the award this season, which had a record number of participants.

Our congratulations to Rhino for a great season.

- The Youth Team Player of the month for March was midfielder Grant Smith.

Smith was chosen by youth development officer Adrian Cole for the award sponsored by Lucozade Sport, the club's official sport drink sponsors.

A presentation was made to Smith by Chris Walters of the Walters Group of Companies, official youth team sponsors.



Young hope: Grant Smith is named youth team player of the month

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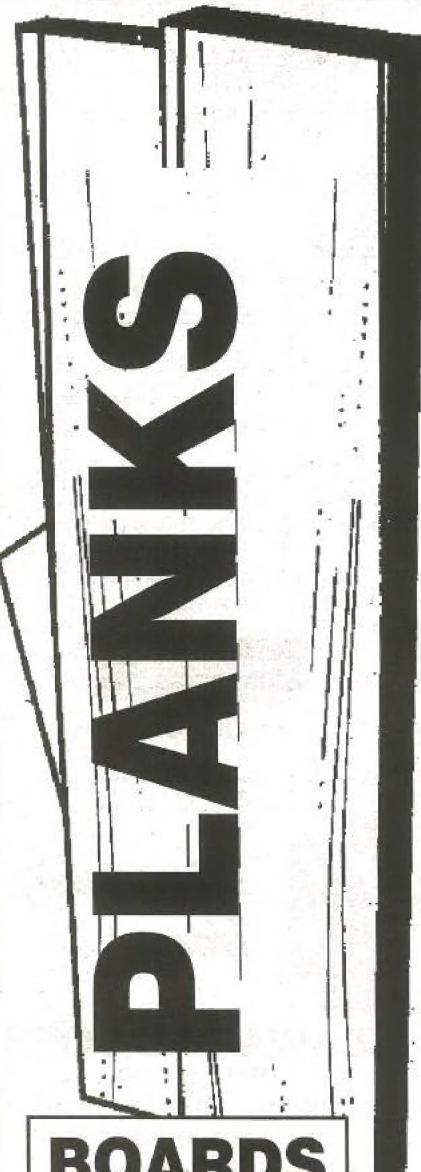
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New kit gets an airing in June

WYCOMBE Wanderers will launch their new Mizuno away kit on June 1 to coincide with the date that season tickets go on sale.

As illustrated, the kit consists of red top with a white collar and white trim on sleeves, red shorts and red socks.

These will all be available exclusively from the club shop, Wanderers in Town in the Octagon Centre in High Wycombe from 9.00am on Monday, June 1.

The Mizuno replica shirts can be purchased for £29.99 each for child sizes and £39.99 each for adult sizes. Shorts

are £14.99 per pair (child) and £18.99 (adult) and socks £6.99 per pair (Boys/Youth) or £7.99 per pair (adult).

Don't forget our super replica kit deals. You can purchase shirt, shorts and socks for only £39.97 for children's sizes and £54.97 for adults sizes.

Wycombe Wanderers have decided to hold their replica kit prices announced on January 1 for the whole of the 1998/99 season.

The three official kits will be (a) navy and sky quartered home kit, (b) yellow and navy quartered away kit (c) all red away kit.

The Mizuno replica shirts can be purchased for £29.99 each for child sizes and £39.99 each for adult sizes. Shorts

You could do worse

Get behind the Blues next season

Wycombe Wanderers' fifth season as members of the Football League comes to a close at Walsall tomorrow with second division football guaranteed for another season.

Since we became a professional club just five years ago our finishing positions have been: Fourth in Division Three (1993/94) - promoted via play offs; Sixth in Division Two (1994/95) - just one place below a play-off position; 12th in Division Two (1995/96); 18th in Division Two (1996/97).

Obviously our final place in this season's league table won't be known until we complete our fixtures tomorrow, but it was possible at the time of writing that we could finish in the top half.

In addition to our playing record, Wanderers are one of a handful of clubs in the Football League who have remained financially viable during the past few seasons.

We also have a stadium and playing area that is the envy of most of our rivals.

Despite so many positive aspects to our short tenure as a League club we continue to attract more than our fair share of negative comments from the very people who should be praising us.

This season our local press has carried reports, letters and opinion columns which have unfairly portrayed the club in a bad light.

As someone who works in the media I defend the right to freedom of speech and believe that everyone should be allowed to express their opinion.

However, I also believe in presenting both sides of an argument and there have been too many occasions when this hasn't happened.

The correspondent of one local newspaper - and I'm not talking about the Bucks Free Press - seems to delight in a mocking style of match reporting which frequently denigrates the efforts of the players.

Many of the articles have had a damaging effect on the club's image and they

rarely attempt to put things into perspective.

I would also challenge the publishers of this newspaper to print the following opinion.

The Bucks Free Press is rightly proud of its independence and is certainly not in business to act as a publicity sheet for Wycombe Wanderers.

However, I believe that our biggest local paper should be more supportive of the club and cut back on the cheap jibes and stories of supposed controversies.

The negative comments from a representative of our independent supporters club certainly haven't helped.

This particular columnist clearly feels that her duty is to expose all the evils that she believes exist at Adams Park. Does she think there is anything we are getting right at Wycombe Wanderers?

My plea for the future is that we all take a more positive approach to what we've got at Wycombe.

I have said many times before that Wanderers image throughout the rest of football is far better than it is on our own doorstep.

Let's be proud of what the club has achieved in such a short period of time.

We've got a decent team, a well appointed and safe stadium and quite possibly the best behaved supporters in the Football League.

No one at Adams Park is foolish enough to believe that we can't improve, but you could do a whole lot worse than supporting Wycombe Wanderers, believe me.

Let's spread the message throughout the summer and hope that attitudes improve next season - I'd dearly love to see a full house for a league game for the first time since we moved in to Adams Park.

Have a wonderful summer - and don't forget to wear your replica shirt on holiday.

Chelsea helped pull youngsters in

WYCOMBE Wanderers Community Scheme would like to thank everyone who participated in our Easter courses with Nas and Dave.

The children were excellent in their attitude with age groups as low as six.

Our first course incorporated a tour to Premiership club Chelsea FC. The interest in this was unbelievable. To see a Premiership ground and the new Chelsea development was very exciting.

Some people might say why are you taking our future supporters to Chelsea? Well, the answer to this is that the majority of children on our courses are regulars and have toured Wanderers on a number of occasions, so we decided to give them a chance to see what a Premiership club looks like.

Most of the children who attend our courses are avid supporters of WWFC, but were all interested in seeing something different.

A small majority were Chelsea supporters, but they also enjoyed our course and we hope they will come back again and become connected with WWFC.

Our next course is at half-term and we look forward to seeing you then.



Go yellow for half price, in May only

WANDERERS are offering the ever popular yellow and navy quartered Mizuno replica shirt at an amazing half price throughout May.

You will be able to purchase the adult shirt for only £19.99 and child shirt for just £14.99.

So whether you need a new shirt for the summer days or are

getting ready for next season's visits to Adams Park, visit the Wanderers in Town Club Shop in the Octagon Centre and treat yourself to a bargain.

The yellow and navy quartered shirt is still in its first year and will be retained by Wycombe Wanderers as an official away players strip for the

1998/99 season.

This offer is for the month of May only.

On June 1 these shirts will go back to their full retail price of £39.99 (adults) and £29.99 (child). The offer is exclusive to Wanderers in Town in the Octagon Centre from May 1 to May 30.

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"It was great, I just loved having the treatments which weren't uncomfortable at all. Afterwards I felt absolutely brilliant, especially when I was able to pull on my Levi's for the first time in ages. It would be a great kick start to a healthy living regime or before a beach holiday. Try it and see!"



"I have always been cynical about salon treatments that claim to tone you up and give you inch-loss ... As far as toning goes, I'm a convert, I lost one and a half inches from my waist, one



"For those suffering from gym burn-out, Arasys offers the perfect toning alternative. While you relax on the beauty couch, 24 carefully placed electrical pads work slack muscles to an astounding effect, and all within ten half-hour sessions ... After only four sessions the bottom became higher, the thighs tighter and the waistband looser ... With Arasys it took two weeks to achieve, in a gym it would have taken two months."

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565146

Now it's all over, let's look ahead

Will Blues be in the promotion hunt?

THE ancient Romans had as their god for the first month in the year Janus who had two faces and, therefore, looked forward and backwards at the same time.

Perhaps, therefore, it is appropriate that the last month of the football year is May because so many teams may get promoted or win something and so many may get relegated.

This year we shall not figure amongst either, having secured safety this year thanks to a late run and congratulations are due to Neil and the team for this.

So on to next year when we know that we shall be up there in the promotion battles.

Relegation has stared so many so-called big clubs in the face this year, and I have been struck by the common whinge from some of their supporters and indeed commentators that such and such a club is so big that they do not deserve to go down.

In my book playing in any division is a privilege and no matter how big you are, whatever the size of your stadium or how glittering your past history, if your team is not playing well enough you will get the division you deserve.

A few years ago we were playing Macclesfield in the Conference and at the time of writing it looks as if we shall both be privileged to be playing each other in Division Two, and we may

WWFC OFFICIAL SUPPORTERS CLUB By Keith Blagbrough

both be playing Manchester City - makes you think does it not?

The Blues Supporters Club Player of the Year this year was Keith Ryan. He has come through two injuries both of which were sufficient to end his career and there is no doubt that his courage in overcoming these, his skill on the field, and his loyalty in signing a new contract with the club were instrumental in our members overwhelmingly voting for him.

Congratulations Keith.

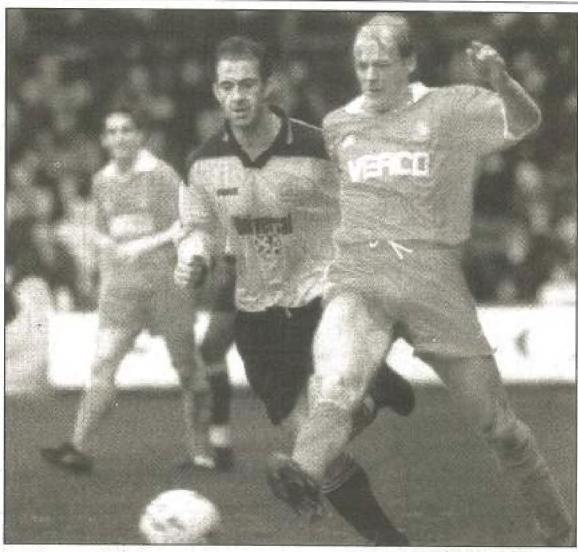
• There is now only one away match left this season but when sorting out your travel for next year do not forget that the Blues Supporters Club run coaches to all our away matches.

With the benefit of a long term agreement we have been able to provide quality travel and keep our prices stable.

Members get a discount of £3 on their tickets.

Bookings can be made with Rena in the foyer of the Vere Suite before and after home matches and by telephone on (01296) 429307.

Members now get ten per cent discount on purchases from the Club Shop, Woodlands and Vere Suite fees, but only if you produce a current membership card so do not forget to renew your membership promptly.



Popular man: Keith Ryan

Have you got your man marked

THE Mark Your Man scheme is still going strong.

Here we list the sponsors of the Wanderers players.

Nell Smillie - The Blues Supporters Club (01494) 563697 (H&A); Dave Jones - available; Martin Taylor - George & Matthew Mackenzie (H), Coach No.1, The Blues Supporters Club (A); Brian Parkin - available; Nicky Mohan - Phil Turner (H), Richard Vere (A); Paul McCarthy - Denzil, Margaret & Andrew Ashcroft (H&A); Michael Forsyth - Bucks Auto Components (H); Jason Kavanagh - Bill & Sheila at The Dialsell Arms (01494) 526760 (H); Jason Corrigan - The Royal Oak, Great Kingshill (01494) 711199 (H); Christine Byre (A); Steve Brown - Paul & Alan Gillott (A).

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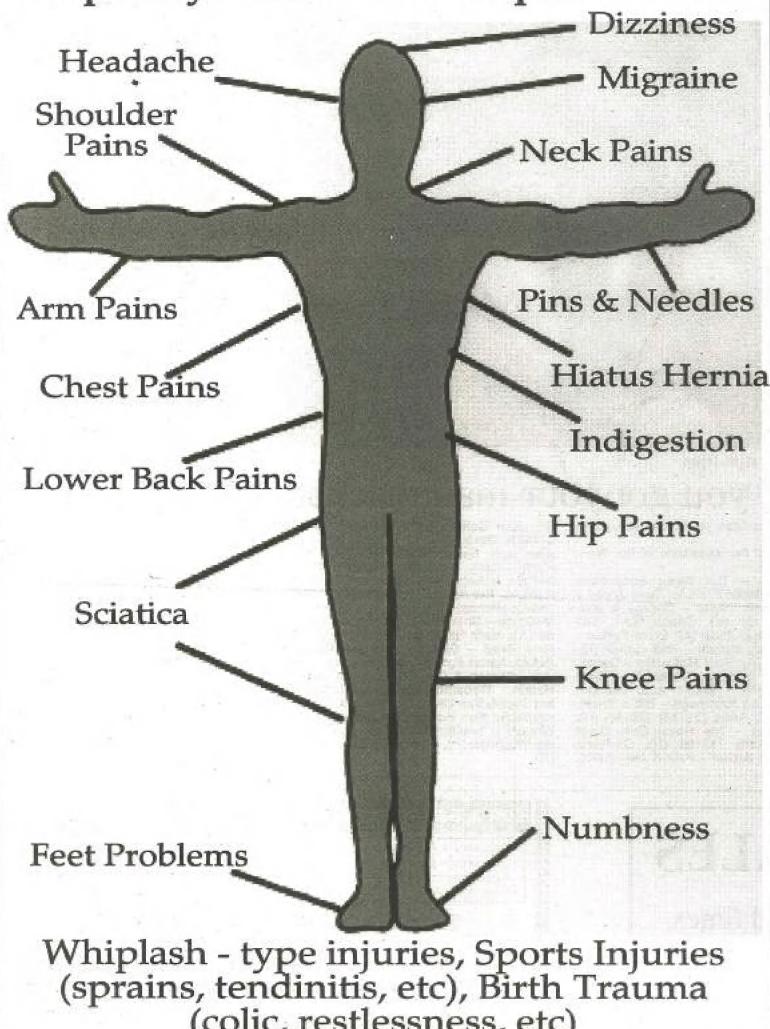
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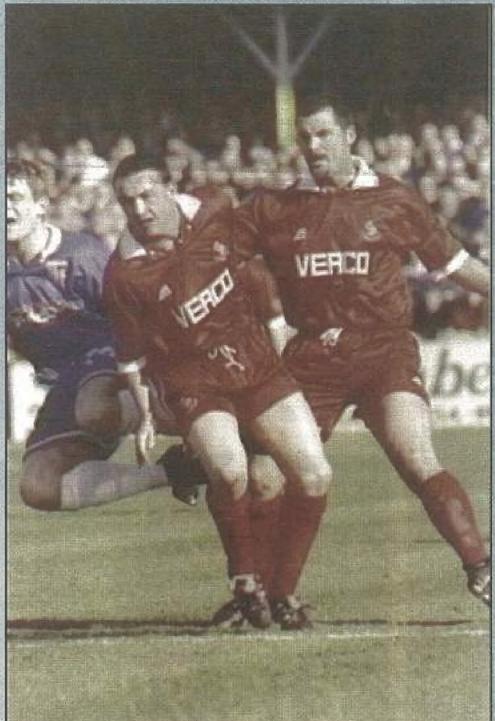
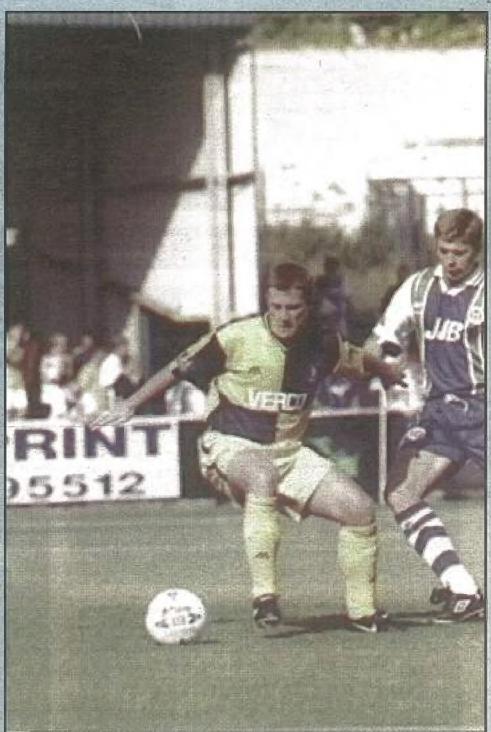

MAY MADNESS

W.W.F.C. REPLICA SHIRTS - HALF PRICE

During May, Wycombe Wanderers are offering the yellow and navy Away Quartered Mizuno Replica Shirt at **HALF PRICE**. Adult Shirts £19.99 and Child Shirts £14.99

This offer is for the month of May only. On the 1st June these shirts will go back to their full retail price of £39.99 (Adults) and £29.99 (Childs).

Please note that this offer is exclusive to Wanderers in Town in the Octagon Centre from 1st May to 30th May 1998 (inclusive)



NEW KIT LAUNCH

The All Red Kit will be available exclusively from Wanderers in Town in the Octagon Centre in High Wycombe from 9.00am on Monday 1st June 1998.

The Mizuno replica shirts can be purchased for £29.99 each for Child sizes and £39.99 each for Adult sizes, shorts are £14.99 per pair (Child) and £18.99 (Adult) and socks £6.99 per pair (Boys/Youth) or £7.99 per pair (Adult).

SUPER REPLICA KIT DEALS Shirt, shorts and socks for only £39.97 for childrens sizes and £54.97 for adults sizes.

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